# ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Video game systems for multiple-player games may exchange game data with each other using hidden synchronizing records similar to instant messages. Small groups of players may connect to an Internet server that provides instant messaging or a buddy chat session and exchange natural language messages as usual. Mixed with these natural language messages may be hidden records containing computer data that each video game system generates and sends to the Internet server to be shared with other video game systems using the same chat session. These hidden status data records keep the video game systems synchronized with each other so that each video game system can generate moving game images of what other player characters are doing. The status data records can alert other game systems of character actions that may require a response by other players and may cause automatic display of various views of the simulated game world for other players. Such automatic views are preferably displayed on an LCD screen in a portable game system linked to video game consoles, so that the automatic display will not disrupt a player's TV screen view of his own player character. Each game player uses a handheld controller to control characters in the same or related simulated game worlds as other players. Each game player may also use a portable game system LCD to display what other game players see on their TV screens or related displays from different points of view. By using an instant messaging service to which game players already subscribe, any additional cost of a new game to each player is minimal.